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Second coordination and management meeting

Summary record of the 33rd meeting
Held at Headquarters, New York, on Thursday, 8 June 2017, at 10 a.m.

President: Ms. Chatardová (Vice-President) ..... (Czechia)

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In the absence of Mr. Shava (Zimbabwe), Ms. Chatardová (Czechia), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 10:10 a.m.

Agenda item 19: Social and human rights questions

(b) Social development (E/2017/26-E/CN.5/2017/10)

1. **Mr. Charwath** (Austria), Chair of the Commission for Social Development, introducing the report on the fifty-fifth session of the Commission for Social Development (E/2017/26-E/CN.5/2017/10), said that Member States had recognized the role of the Commission as a global multi-stakeholder forum for evidence-based, action-oriented substantive discussions to promote social development, including through the sharing of good practices and lessons learned at the national and regional levels. The Commission provided integrated and coherent policy guidance on inclusive social policies, serving as a guardian within the United Nations system to ensure that no one was left behind in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The Bureau of the fifty-fifth session had placed emphasis on granting as much room as possible to all interested parties to participate in the work of the Commission.

2. Despite impressive progress in reducing poverty, 767 million people still lived in extreme poverty globally. In some regions, high growth rates and greater access to education and health had not translated into significant reductions in poverty rates. High and rising inequality across and within countries threatened to undermine future growth and hinder poverty eradication efforts. Ending poverty in all its forms required more inclusive, integrated, coherent and innovative social policy frameworks, poverty eradication strategies and national development plans. Greater efforts should be made to address the specific needs of vulnerable groups through a combination of universal and targeted policy interventions and the promotion of broad participation in decision-making processes. Promoting decent jobs and social protection policies had proven effective in that regard.

3. Coherence and coordination across sectoral policies would make growth more inclusive and pro-poor, and reduce vulnerabilities while building resilience to climate-related risks. Political will, strong institutional capacities, including the statistical capacity to collect disaggregated data, and national reporting mechanisms must also be strengthened. Such efforts must be supported by an enabling international environment in which official development assistance (ODA) commitments were honoured, and which included greater capacity-building, technical cooperation and resource mobilization.

4. The Commission's high-level panel discussion entitled "Promoting Integrated Policies for Poverty Eradication: Youth Development in the 2030 Agenda" had highlighted the challenges faced by young people, including high levels of un- and underemployment, limited access to quality education, and insufficient skills development and training. Panellists had also stressed the need to mainstream youth in poverty eradication strategies; to collect age-disaggregated data for the design, implementation and monitoring of evidence-based youth policies; and to strengthen youth participation at all levels of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. The panel had also discussed entrepreneurship, education, skills development, the use of information and communications technologies to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, and the sharing of good practices on youth employment schemes in particular.

5. In another high-level panel discussion, entitled "Leaving No One Behind: Poverty and Disability", panellists had shared national, regional and global experiences in poverty eradication efforts targeting persons with disabilities. The panel had emphasized the need to mainstream disability rights into all future sustainable development efforts, as well as for States and international organizations to promote and protect the rights of persons with disabilities, including their full participation in decision-making and the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

6. The Commission had also emphasized the importance of supporting the well-being and rights of older persons as a specific target group. While many older persons were living longer, many also suffered from poor standards of living and poverty. Although many Governments had extended social protection schemes to improve the well-being of older persons, particularly through pensions, pension benefit levels were not always adequate to enable older persons to live with dignity above the poverty line. Older women in particular faced a much greater risk of poverty.

7. The Commission had noted the critical role of the family in cultural, political and socioeconomic development, emphasizing the need to support families, children and young people in fighting poverty and promoting social inclusion and intergenerational solidarity in order to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. Cash transfers, early childhood development and family-friendly workplace conditions had been highlighted as effective programmes in that regard.

8. The Commission had adopted two draft resolutions that it recommended for adoption by the Economic and Social Council, entitled "Social Dimensions of the New Partnership for Africa's Development" and "Promoting the rights of persons with disabilities and strengthening the mainstreaming of disability in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development". The Commission had also adopted a resolution entitled "Policies and programmes involving youth" which it was bringing to the attention of the Council.

9. As the topics and deliberations of the Commission for Social Development were highly relevant to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda, greater attention should be paid to structuring the agenda, programme of work, input and policy advice the Commission could provide in order to maximize its contribution.

10. **Mr. Ríos Sánchez** (Observer for Mexico) said that the 2030 Agenda was a national undertaking as well as a collective mission to eradicate poverty in all its forms, ensure that no one was left behind, and promote the rights of women, youth, families, older persons, persons with disabilities and all other vulnerable populations.

11. However, social development must be envisioned from multiple angles. In the context of the reform of the United Nations development system, further thought should be given to the future of the Commission for Social Development, which currently saw its work being duplicated by other bodies and thus becoming irrelevant. The Commission's 20-year-old vision, which distanced it from the work of the Economic and Social Council and the high-level political forum on sustainable development, must be updated to reflect the new paradigm. Member States must participate in and contribute to the Commission to avoid repeating previous patterns. When it assumed its role as Vice-Chair of the Commission, Mexico would take into account the new development paradigm.

Action on recommendations contained in the report of the Commission for Social Development on its fifty-fifth session (E/2017/26-E/CN.5/2017/10)

12. **The President** invited the Council to take action on the draft proposals contained in chapter I, sections A and B of the report, and on decision 55/101 contained in chapter I, section C.

Section A

Draft resolution I: Social dimensions of the New Partnership for Africa's Development

Draft resolution II: Promoting the rights of persons with disabilities and strengthening the mainstreaming of disability in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

13. *Draft resolutions I and II were adopted.*

Section B

Draft decision: Report of the Commission for Social Development on its fifty-fifth session and provisional agenda and documentation for the fifty-sixth session

14. *The draft decision was adopted.*

Section C

Decision 55/101: Nomination of members of the Board of the United Nations Research Institute for Social Development

15. **The President** said she took it that the Council wished to confirm the nomination of Sylvie Durrer and the renomination of Jimi Adesina, Asef Bayat, David Hulme, Joakim Palme and Onalenna Selolwane to the Board of the United Nations Research Institute for Social Development.

16. *It was so decided.*

Agenda item 12: Coordination, programme and other questions

(a) Reports of coordination bodies (E/2017/55)

17. **Ms. Petrova** (Director of the secretariat of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB)), introducing the annual overview report of the Chief Executives Board for Coordination for 2016 (E/2017/55), said that, as the longest-standing and highest-level internal coordination mechanism within the United Nations, the Board brought together the Executive Heads of the specialized agencies, the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, the World Trade Organization, and United Nations funds and programmes. The Director-General of the International Organization for Migration (IOM) had become the latest member to join the Board in September 2016.

18. The key role of the Board was strengthening synergies and promoting coherence and coordination among United Nations organizations on issues of system-wide concern. The report presented a number of the Board's accomplishments in 2016, including the

endorsement of 11 common principles to guide United Nations system support for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the publication of a book entitled "*Transitioning from the Millennium Development Goals to the Sustainable Development Goals*". The Board had endorsed several statements reaffirming its commitment to eliminating discrimination, reducing inequalities, and supporting conflict prevention and peacebuilding. The shared United Nations system framework for action on equality and non-discrimination had been converted into a user-friendly e-publication format, available on the Board's website, to facilitate its widespread adoption. The publication would be formally launched at Headquarters in the forthcoming weeks.

19. The High-level Committee on Programmes had provided coordinated preparation and follow-up to major United Nations conferences and summits, including the Fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, the Third United Nations World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction and the twenty-first session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. The Committee had also developed joint contributions and system-wide inputs for the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III).

20. Through the Committee, United Nations system entities had enjoyed the opportunity to review and provide guidance on a toolkit intended to serve as a set of guidelines and best practices for mainstreaming the Istanbul Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011-2020 into their work programmes. New ways to enhance the overall effectiveness of United Nations system support for foreign direct investment in least developed countries were being envisioned. The Committee had moreover developed a set of common core principles for a system-wide approach to climate change that had been endorsed by the Board.

21. In 2016, the High-level Committee on Management had focused its activities on the harmonization and simplification of business practices in the areas of finance and budget, human resources, information and communications technologies and procurement. Multilingualism continued to be a priority for the United Nations system. The Committee had developed a medium-term work programme to strengthen United Nations system collaboration and coherence with regard to the harmonization of business practices, service delivery, partnerships, human resources, staff safety, data, and risk management.

22. The United Nations Development Group had focused on improving the functioning of the development system and the resident coordinator system in support of country-level implementation of the 2030 Agenda, in particular by developing guidance notes, reference guides and reports. The Group had also introduced a new performance management system for the resident coordinators and country teams aimed at enhancing leadership and accountability in delivering as one at the country level. Monitoring progress on operational coherence and coordination had been further enhanced through the improvement of a web-based tracking system and the publication of a results report on coordination in 2016.

23. The first regular session of the Board, held in Geneva in April, had adopted a new retreat format to foster strategic and dynamic exchanges; discussion topics had included the state of the world, the future of multilateralism, and the reform of the United Nations development system. In initiating the deliberations on the state of the world, the Secretary-General had noted that in the face of new geopolitical trends, such as the changing nature of conflict and global terrorist threats, the United Nations would have to adapt to new and challenging situations while focusing on prevention and resilience.

24. In an exchange of views on the global economic situation, the Board had stressed the need to pursue sustained and more equitable and inclusive growth. While a recovery in growth to pre-crisis levels was generally projected, uneven growth in Africa and the continuing decline in productivity remained particular concerns. Other aspects of the challenging global environment included the increasing fragility and declining power of the central state; erosion of trust in public institutions and governance; diffusion of economic power and trade relationships; life-altering advances in science and technology; social and demographic shifts; climate change and other environmental pressures; changing patterns of poverty; and, increasingly, frequent clashes of ideals and identities.

25. The Board had agreed that the United Nations system should respond to those complexities by working in a collaborative and coherent manner, and had highlighted areas for action of particular relevance for achieving the 2030 Agenda, including deep-rooted inequalities, labour market challenges, information and communications technologies and digital inclusion, infrastructure development and the creation of new opportunities for young people.

26. As for the discussion on the future of multilateralism, she said that an increasingly multipolar world both posed threats and created opportunities. Multilateralism was often perceived by the public as ineffective and benefiting only those at the top. Public trust and confidence in established institutions were on the decline. The Board had therefore urged the United Nations system to take urgent action to fill the moral vacuum by continuing to advocate and safeguard United Nations values and standards, and to reinvent its role as a connector in a fragmented world by promoting the diversity of values and multiculturalism. Platforms should be created to engage all actors on related issues by fully utilizing the comparative advantage of the normative agenda of the United Nations. Trust must be rebuilt by showcasing measureable results on the ground and improving on existing successes.

27. The reform of the United Nations development system had focused thus far on increasing leadership at all levels through a more robust resident coordinator system, and by strengthening accountability and trust regarding system-wide activities and improving country-level delivery. The demands of the 2030 Agenda would require the development system to adapt to the realities of the twenty-first century. Accountability for delivering joint outcomes and results must be strengthened; better performance management, greater coordination and pooled financing would be necessary to that end. Prevention was a cross-cutting responsibility that must be integrated into the work of the United Nations system. More synergies and complementarities must be created between humanitarian and development entities and activities. Finally, the United Nations system must enhance its capacity to engage with a wide variety of partners, including the private sector and civil society, while providing its specific value added as a standard-setter and convener.

28. **Mr. Vestrheim** (Norway) said that the annual overview report of the work of the Chief Executives Boards for Coordination was a crucial component in improving the Board's transparency and responsiveness to Member States, as called for in the quadrennial comprehensive policy review. Perhaps, however, the annual report should be presented during the operational activities for development segment rather than during a coordination and management meeting of the Economic and Social Council.

29. Reporting on the deployment of the standard operating procedures was a good example of evidence-based information on changes in the working methods and behaviour of the United Nations development system. He called for more reporting of that kind. Referring to the information provided by the High-level Committee on Management, he said that it would have been useful to know what savings had resulted from harmonization and simplification. With regard to the many statements and policy documents produced by the High-level Committee on Programmes for the follow-up of the 2030 Agenda, more information on their implementation by agencies would have been appreciated.

30. To improve the transparency of the Board, the work plans and annual reports of the United Nations Development Group, the High-level Committee on Management and the High-level Committee on Programmes should be made available.

31. The annual report did not explain what the Board had done aside from endorsing the products of its subsidiary mechanisms. It would be beneficial to examine how the Board could contribute to holding individual agencies accountable for the implementation of the policies and guidelines to which they had agreed. Norway hoped that would be considered in the report of the Secretary-General on follow-up of paragraph 45 of the quadrennial comprehensive policy review.

32. **Ms. Arrieta Mungia** (Observer for Mexico) said that her country welcomed the adoption of the CEB common principles to guide the United Nations system's support to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development through a results-based approach tailored to national realities, and its common core principles and United Nations system strategic approach on climate change action.

33. Her delegation welcomed the work of the High-level Committee on Management on procurement, finance and budget, human resources, and information and communications technologies but also urged the High-level Committee to redouble its efforts to ensure more efficient use of resources by all system entities.

34. She commended the Board for its contribution to the International Civil Service Commission comprehensive review of the common system compensation package for staff in the Professional or higher categories and called on it to participate actively in the comprehensive review of the compensation package for locally recruited staff and field staff.

35. She praised the efforts of the Working Group on After-service Health Insurance to find a sustainable, comprehensive and long-term solution for the liabilities outlined in the International Public Sector Accounting Standards. For the time being, it remained

preferable for organizations to cover such costs with their existing revenue streams.

36. Mexico welcomed the Board's commitment to conflict prevention and peacebuilding in the broader context of the 2030 Agenda and to the strengthening of United Nations system capacities to identify the causes of conflict, provide early warning, respond rapidly to imminent threats and scale up cross-cutting cooperation at all levels in all efforts to ensure peace, security, human rights, development and humanitarian assistance. The evolving nature of conflicts required a new course of action and innovative strategies and tools to break the vicious cycle of violence.

37. There was an opportunity to change the world's perception of the United Nations as a profligate institution with inefficient processes, high personnel costs, duplication of functions and obsolete mandates that were shielded by bureaucracy and escaped the rigorous assessment that should have led to their termination. Her delegation would support the periodic review and termination of mandates that had already been fulfilled, and a human resources system in which promotions were based on quality and efficiency of performance, as well as equity

38. The new paradigm proposed by the 2030 Agenda and other international instruments encouraged greater core funding of development activities. Agency coordination, both centrally and on the ground, must be more efficient and open to evaluation by recipient countries.

39. **Ms. Petrova** (Director of the secretariat of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB)) said that suggestions for improvement would be conveyed to the Secretary-General and considered by the Chief Executives Board when preparing for the following session.

40. Although several examples of savings had been provided in the annual overview report, the report was limited in length. Most of the work of the High-level Committee on Management was described on the Board's website. Those looking for more information were urged to reach out to the secretariat of the Chief Executives Board, which stood ready to provide examples of savings.

41. As for making the work plans of member organizations publicly available, she said that the Board merely coordinated the work of many different bodies, each with its own responsibilities in terms of reporting to intergovernmental entities. The work plans of the member organizations of the Board were available online; the request for greater transparency in their work plans would be conveyed. What the Board could do, however, was hold individual organizations more accountable for implementing statements and policy decisions. As the highest-level strategic mechanism for international coordination within the United Nations, the Board must ensure transparency and accountability at the highest levels, in alignment with the resolution on the quadrennial comprehensive policy review.

42. The Human Resources Network within the High-level Committee on Management coordinated work on behalf of the United Nations system with the International Civil Service Commission. The current review of the common system compensation package for locally recruited staff and field staff was supported by the Human Resources Network.

43. The Board ensured that the indivisibility of the Sustainable Development Goals remained at the forefront of all United Nations system efforts, including in the areas of peace and security. The system must focus on prevention, building resilience, addressing the new challenges posed by terrorist threats, and the changing environment of multilateralism.

Agenda item 18: Economic and environmental questions

(l) Transport of dangerous goods (E/2017/53)

44. **Mr. Kervalla** (Chief of the Dangerous Goods and Special Cargoes Section, Sustainable Transport Division, United Nations Economic Commission for Europe), speaking via video link from Geneva, introduced the report of the Secretary-General on the work of the Committee of Experts on the Transport of Dangerous Goods and on the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals (E/2017/53). Established in 1953, the Committee of Experts was tasked with elaborating recommendations on the transport of dangerous goods; those recommendations were updated every two years to take account of technological progress and new safety or security challenges. They were widely and effectively implemented through national laws in all countries that had a significant economic interest in the international carriage of dangerous goods, as well as by international organizations which were depositaries of multilateral treaties that addressed the carriage of dangerous goods by specific modes of transport and administered relevant legal instruments.

45. The recommendations served as a basis for improving the safety of transport of dangerous goods and for harmonizing all national and international rules

for different modes of transport; they therefore had a significant impact not only on safety improvement, but also on economic development thanks to transport and trade facilitation resulting from harmonization.

46. The mandate of the Committee had been extended in 1999 to the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals in response to the chemical safety goals contained in chapter 19 of Agenda 21. The work of the Committee was thus not limited to transport but concerned all other sectors, such as supply and use of chemicals, storage, workplace safety, and protection of the environment. The worldwide implementation of the United Nations Globally Harmonized System entailed both improvement of chemical safety and economic benefits resulting from harmonization and trade facilitation.

47. The report of the Secretary-General contained detailed information on the implementation of Council resolution 2015/7. In particular, the nineteenth revised edition of the *Recommendations on the Transport of Dangerous Goods: Model Regulations*, the sixth revised edition of the *Recommendations on the Transport of Dangerous Goods: Manual of Tests and Criteria*, and the sixth revised edition of the *Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals* had been published in all six United Nations languages.

48. The International Maritime Organization, the International Civil Aviation Organization, the Intergovernmental Organization for International Carriage by Rail and the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe had already amended their respective legal instruments on the transport of dangerous goods to give effect to the recommended new provisions. Many countries had also updated their legislation applicable to domestic transport accordingly. As previously requested, the secretariat of the Committee had collected information on the contact details of competent authorities responsible for national regulations governing transport of dangerous goods, and of those responsible for the approval of the packaging design type and the allocation of the United Nations certification mark. The information provided by Member States was available on the Commission's website at the address indicated in the report, though unfortunately not all States had contributed. The secretariat had likewise collected information on the effective implementation worldwide of the Globally Harmonized System: 72 countries, including the major producers of chemical products, were continuing, or had initiated, activities to implement the system.

49. The third part of the report focused on the work of the Committee of Experts during the 2015-2016 biennium; the Committee invited the Council to request the Secretary-General to publish its new recommendations, and to invite Governments and relevant organizations to take account of those recommendations and provide feedback. The fourth part comprised a programme of work and meeting schedule for the 2017-2018 biennium. The Council was invited to approve the programme of work by adopting the draft resolution contained in part I of the report.

Draft resolution: Work of the Committee of Experts on the Transport of Dangerous Goods and on the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals

50. **The President** invited the Council to take action on the draft resolution contained in part I of the report (E/2017/53).

51. *The draft resolution was adopted.*

Agenda item 10: The role of the United Nations system in implementing the ministerial declaration of the high-level segment of the substantive session of the Economic and Social Council

Agenda item 11: Implementation of and follow-up to major United Nations conferences and summits
(A/72/75-E/2017/56)

52. **Ms. Petracci** (Senior Economic Affairs Officer of the Division for Sustainable Development, Department of Economic and Social Affairs), introducing the report of the Secretary-General on mainstreaming of the three dimensions of sustainable development throughout the United Nations system (A/72/75-E/2017/56), said that the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio +20) had called for accelerating the implementation of sustainable development as a means of eradicating poverty. United Nations development institutions must ensure coherence of their programmes and policies for sustainable development.

53. In the call to further mainstream the three dimensions of sustainable development throughout the work of the United Nations, the Secretary-General had been invited to continue reporting to the General Assembly, through the Economic and Social Council, on progress made.

54. In response to that request, the report explored the issue of mainstreaming sustainable development throughout the transformative and universal framework of the 2030 Agenda. As the Sustainable Development Goals were interlinked and indivisible, progress in one

Goal could only be achievable alongside simultaneous progress in all the Goals. The report built on the findings contained in its four previous incarnations and highlighted the ways in which the Goals were at the core of the 2030 Agenda. United Nations organizations were acknowledging the importance of the integrated and holistic nature of the Agenda, and were shaping their strategic plans and programmes accordingly. The links between sustainable development efforts and progress in humanitarian affairs and peace and security were also noted in the report.

55. The report provided an update on the work of United Nations system organizations attempting to integrate the 2030 Agenda into their programmes, including through strategic planning, the creation of updated guidelines and toolkits for use by United Nations country teams, and support to Member States' voluntary reporting on progress in implementing the Goals.

56. The report addressed the ways that the United Nations was working to make its own facilities and management operations more sustainable. While the report contained no specific recommendations, it did recognize the need to strengthen the system-wide approach to the Sustainable Development Goals in line with the quadrennial comprehensive policy review.

57. **Ms. Arrieta Mungía** (Observer for Mexico) said that a cross-cutting approach to the United Nations development system and the measurement of its impact would be necessary to achieve the three dimensions of sustainable development and the Sustainable Development Goals. The report reiterated the universal, integrated and indivisible nature of the Goals, whereby progress with regard to one Goal could only be achieved with simultaneous progress in all the Goals. Her delegation prioritized maintaining a holistic vision that ensured policy coherence with regard to the social, economic and environmental dimensions of sustainable development, as well as greater coordination between the activities of the entities of the United Nations development system.

58. Mexico called on all United Nations agencies, funds and programmes to redesign their structures, actions, strategic plans and national programmes in line with the objectives of the new sustainable development framework, while maintaining a focus on human rights, social inclusion, equality and the gender perspective and striving to eliminate the root causes of conflict and crisis worldwide.

59. That holistic approach leading to sustainable peace could only be achieved through the full implementation of the three dimensions of sustainable development and the accomplishment of all 17 Goals, bearing in mind their interlinkages with disaster risk reduction and humanitarian action. Mexico welcomed the new generation of United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks designed to mobilize the entire system to achieve sustainable peace in conflict-affected countries, in conformity with the relevant resolutions.

60. **Mr. Aguirre Vacchieri** (Chile) said that it was important for United Nations agencies, funds and programmes to take into account the national priorities of each country when considering the three dimensions of sustainable development.

Agenda item 2: Adoption of the agenda and other organizational matters *(continued)* (E/2017/L.23)

Draft decision E/2017/L.23: Economic and Social Council event to discuss the transition from relief to development

61. **The President** invited the Council to take action on the draft decision entitled "Economic and Social Council event to discuss the transition from relief to development" (E/2017/L.23). The draft decision contained no programme budget implications.

62. *The draft decision was adopted.*

The meeting rose at 11.40 a.m.